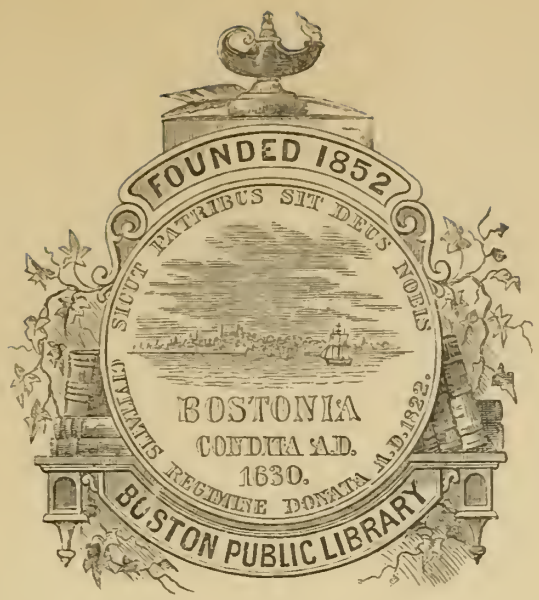
No. 7560a 9

THE TRUSTEES OF THE
PUBLIC LIBRARY
LUX
OMNIUM
CIVIUM
OF THE CITY OF
BOSTON
1852 · 1878




K. 1637 20

# PAMPHLETS.

Emigration

+ 76029

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2015

https://archive.org/details/westernemigratio00wilk

I have been!!
I am going to Illinois!

# WESTERN EMIGRATION.

# NARRATIVE

OF A

## TOUR TO, & ONE YEAR'S RESIDENCE IN

## "EDENSBURGH," (Illinois,)

BY MAJOR WALTER WILKEY,

An honest Yeoman of Mooseboro', State of Maine.

A more humorsome and interesting "Traveller's Guide to the West," was never before published, and by which it will be perceived that the famous "MAINE-PINE-SWAMP SPECULATION," has been completely out-done!

EMBELLISHED WITH APPROPRIATE CUTS.

You that in *comic* tales delight
To pass the time away,
Some leisure hour (by day or night,)
Read WILKEY'S book, I pray;
It cannot fail to make you *laugh* your fill,
And *cure* the *spleen* beyond a Doctor's *skill!*

NEW-YORK:

G. CLAIRBORNE, AND OTHERS, PUBLISHERS.

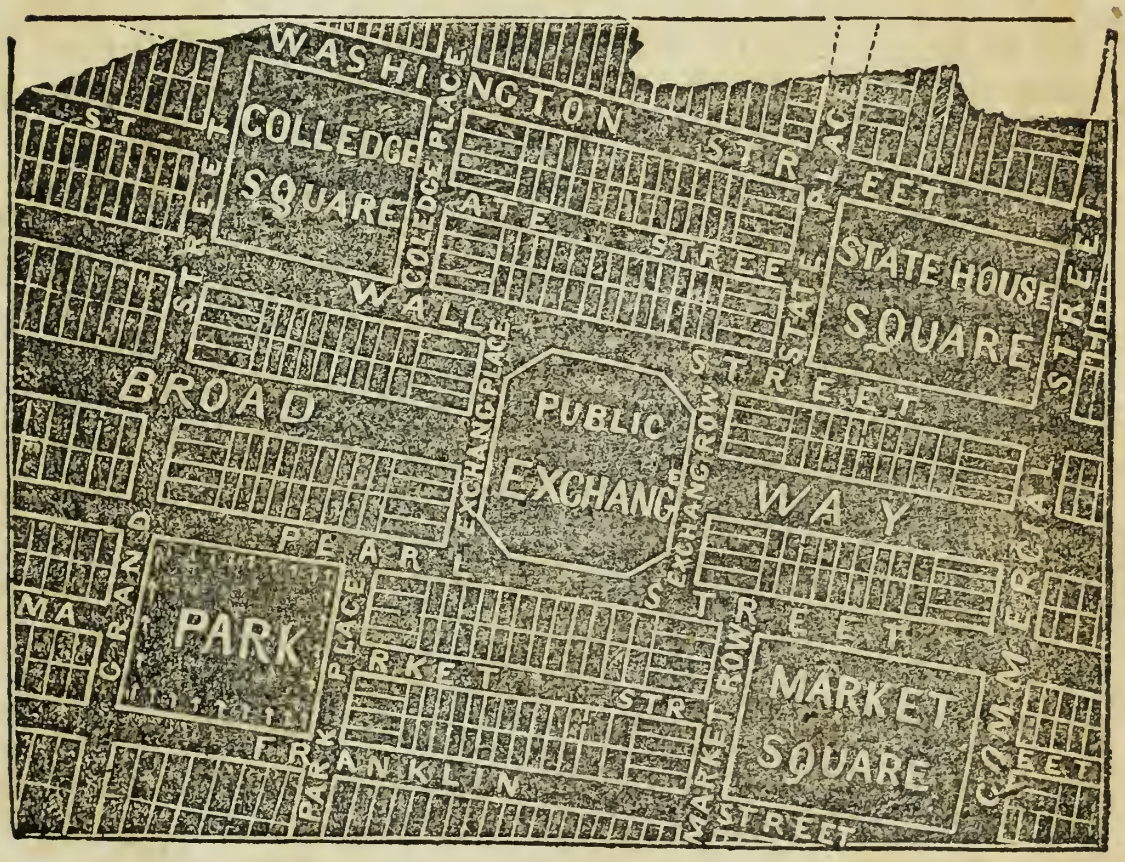
1839.

rival the cities of New-York and Philadelphia! and like the former, already boasting of her public squares, her parks, her parade grounds, her 'Change!—Broadway—Wall—Washington—Pearl—Franklin—Grand—Commercial and other streets." Howsomever, a tom-fool as I have been, there is a *leetle* consolation left for the Major yet; for it is a right-down-uncontradictable fact, that he was for a long time powder proof against the ten thousand reports in circulation, from Kittery to Mooseboro', of the 'increasing wealth and population of the far-famed West,' until, as bad luck would have it, he was beset by one of those leetle-too-slick-Yankee-land-jobbing-Gull-Catchers! a second 'Simon Swap,' who proved himself as smart in the manufacture of new Cities in the West, as that of wooden bowls, combs, clocks, pork hams and nutmegs in the East! and who first introduced himself among us as 'Squire Samuel Soaper,' and the better to effect his object, finding fault with and underrating almost everything that could be considered the produce of Mooseboro'!—the 'barrenness of the soil—impurity of the water—infectious air—sour crabbed fruit—blasted corn—watery potatoes—distempered cattle, and scabby sheep!!' and, what was a leetle too *personal*, and withal, a right-down-wilful *lie*—the puny, half-starved-Job-like-appearance of our own dear *selves*, the *Mooseites!*' not forgetting at the same time to draw wonderful comparisons, and to extol to the skies the abundant and luxuriant produce of the West!—'pure air—sweet water—*healthy* climate—(mark that fellow traveller)—fertile and easy cultivation of the prairies—extensive and *self-sown* wheat fields!'—and, what was wonderful indeed, always free and accessable to innumerable droves of well fatted *wild hogs!* ripe for the slaughter, and so exceedingly kind and accommodating to Maine emigrants, as to approach their barn-yards once a week (not to be *fed*, but lo) to be *butchered!*' Indeed there was nothing of that country's produce which the 'Squire' did not most extravagantly boast, the Fever and Ague excepted, about which he was as mum as a toad-fish! although the whole country so abounded therewith, that had seven-eights been *barrelled* and *exported* to other parts of the world, there would have remaided enough in all conscience, to have set half New-England into the *shivers!*

Having thus described a *few* of the advantages and good qualities of the West, this honest (soft) Soaper very modestly observed, that for the *accommodation* of some of his eastern *friends*, (as was once said by another of the *family*, who offered to exchange *new* feathers for *old*, bushel for bushel) he had a good first rate Illinois Farm, of

300 acres, (producing 400 bushels to an acre) and a few *very* valuable house lots, in the thriving city of Edensburgh, that he would exchange for one or two *inferior* farms in Maine ;' and with saying which, drew from the pocket of his pantaloons (carefully enveloped in parchment,) a '*Platt*' as he termed it, of his 'famous thriving *City !*' Here it is, fellow traveller ; and the Major will wage that a better *Gull Nett* was never before woven by one of the most skillful artists in the country—good, bad, or indifferent. Fags, the Major was most *nappingly* caught therein, neck and heels, boots and spurs, soul and body ! and from which as the fly once said to the spider, he found it a leetle-desperately-difficult to disentangle himself !

PLATT OF THE CITY OF 'EDENSBURGH.'




It was at this period, fellow traveller, that Major Wilkey possessed clear of debt, as good a farm of 250 acres, as Mooseboro' could boast of—producing quite enough of the necessaries of life for the subsistence of his family, then composed of six souls, self, wife, three remarkably smart and healthy boys, and Ceasar, an old faithful family black—and all as happy and contented as need be, until the arrival among us of that crafty speculator ; that kind and obliging *swapper* of *new* farms for *old !* and on whose representation of the advantages and enjoyments of a *City* life, Mrs. Wilkey and the boys became so

elated, that the temptation was, I must confess (to speak grammatically) bordering a mighty deal on *irresistibility!* Howsomever, not to be too hasty to close with the stranger, the Major begged that his family might be indulged with the privilege of one night to *dream* about it (Mrs. Wilkey with the "Platt" under her pillow!) and if the dream of but one should be considered in any way propitious, the bargain should be closed the ensuing morning, and the deed signed, sealed, and delivered without further delay; which not being objected to on the part of 'Squire Soaper, my family retired early to bed, with a determination, (asleep or awake) to dream of nothing but about the contemplated exchange! and, as a *dream* was thus not only to determine the fate of the old homestead, but probably that of the Major and his family *forever*, sometime before the break of day all were up and prepared to relate and to hear related, each other's dreams. The lot falling first on *me*, I found it no difficult task to tell all I *dreamed*; for I assured my family that whether it could be considered a dream or not, I could not for the life of me 'sleep a wink' the whole night, for thinking of the new 'Farm of 300 acres and the 400 bushels to an acre!' Mrs. Wilkey's turn came next, who with equal confidence declared that she 'positively dreamed (but whether *asleep or awake* she could not tell) that she had a full and clear view of Edensburgh; and while taking a delightful promenade down Broadway, was met by her three boys, Jonathan, Jerry and Joe, garbed in the style of *gentlemen*, with black fox-tail whiskers, just from their commercial and mercantile business!' Never could mortal beings be more elated and transported with joy, than were the boys on hearing the relation of their mother's dream, which they declared accorded exactly with their own—as they had not ceased to dream, night and day, asleep or awake, that they were all three destined to be great men in Edensburgh!

Mrs. Wilkey, as well as the rest of the family, with one exception, now without hesitation, expressed her belief that the *exchange* would be a wise and judicious one. From this opinion, however, old *Ceaze* dissented: having been raised from his infancy upon the *homestead*, he felt too much attached thereto, to behold it thus dreamed or rather fooled away, and remained silent. ''Pend on't, Massa Major, said he, as de say be, one bird in de hand is ten times better den a whole flock of 'um in de *bushes!*' And, in truth, fellow traveller, I have by bitter experience, since found out to my sorrow that the pronostication of old Ceaze was correct—Mrs. Wilkey and

the boys were, however, of quite a different opinion, and being so overjoyed at the thoughts of exchanging a country for a city life, that they became impatient for an immediate reference to the 'Platt,' and a selection of the twenty undisposed of house lots that had been kindly offered in part payment for the premises—in this selection it may be well for me to remark, friend, that the Major had nothing to do, his mind being at that moment too much engaged (to the exclusion of every thing of minor importance) how and in what manner, he could improve his new farm (producing 400 bushels to an acre) to the best advantage—whether to devote a part or the whole, to the cultivation of peas, beans, or parsnips!—the choice of lots was therefore left wholly and totally to Mrs. Wilkey and the boys,—the first choice falling to the mother, she selected four of the most pleasant and centrally situated, in *Broadway* near *Pearl;* intending that on each should be erected a splendid mansion, one for the Major and self, and one for each of the three boys; the next choice devolving on Jonathan, and taking it for granted that he would ultimately become an exporter and importer of domestic and foreign goods, he selected all the unoccupied lots on 'Commercial-street!' while Jerry selected five of the best on ''Change?' and Josey the same number between 'College!' and 'State House Squares!'—each being thus supplied to his mind, and the 'Platt' about to be returned to the 'Squire,' old Ceaze, (who until that moment had remained in a state of sullen silence,) now put in his claim, for at least the choice of one lot—for 'what (said he,) you tink old neger goen do to *muse*, and *ploy* hesef, in *Hellinoy*, (as you call 'um)—where de grain *sow*, *reap*, and *trash* hesef! and de hog *feed*, *fatten* and *kill* hesef?' The argument of the impertinent black prevailed, and a lot was granted him from the number selected by Jonathan, in 'Commercial-street' as Ceaze said 'he should like 'um bess near low water mark, where he could muse 'umself '*casionally* digging *clam!*'

The exchange being now amicably and finally agreed on, the deeds were filled by the 'Squire (who had a pocket full of them) and were presented to self and wife for our signatures! which I must confess, fellow traveller, on the reflection that we were about to sign away our patrimonial portions, and to quit-claim forever our right and title to the old homestead, produced for the moment, sensations similar (probably) to those of two wretched condemned criminals, when about to sign (by compulsion) their death warrants! But it was too late now to repent, the papers were signed, sealed and delivered, and 'Squire

*Soaper* put into possession of the premises!—and the next thing to be done, was to commence forthwith preparations for a remove, in quest of, and to take possession of our newly acquired Farm, and the 'twenty valuable unoccupied house lots!' I had still remaining a tolerably good draught horse, and an old farm wagon (which providentially I had not *dreamed* away) and into which were deposited a few of the most useful articles of kitchen furniture, which it was supposed would be most wanted when we should reach our journey's end; and on the top a small vacancy was left, to be occupied by my family. Thus prepared, after a farewell shake of hands with my neighbors, we bid, on my part, and no doubt on that of Ceaze, a melancholy adieu to Mooseboro'!

Our journey, for a few days, was as comfortable and as pleasant as could be expected; but when we reached the northwest corner of old Massachusetts, and began to ascend the heights of Peru, the travel became rough, and withal, a little *stumpy*; my family were, as might be supposed, squeezed like a snarl of young pigs, into a very narrow compass; old Ceaze occupying no better seat then what a long legged iron pot, reversed, afforded him; and from whom at every jirk or jolt of the wagon, a sigh, or bitter groan, was sure to be heard, accompanied with an expression of pain and madness! It was about noon of the eighth day of our journey, when we reached that charming half-Dutch city of Albany, where, finding that spare beds with *clean sheets* for 'Yankee emigrants' were despert scarce at the public houses, we made all possible haste to find, as we had been advised to do by our friend 'Squire *Soaper*, one of the canal-penny-a-mile boats; and, withal, one of a jolly mess of passengers engaged; as the Major had been told that 'a drag up the canal, *without* company, would prove a prodigious long and lonesome one!' and, as luck would have it, on my first inquiry, a captain was found, who said that a penny-a-mile was his price, and all that he asked; and that as regarded the 'jolly mess,' he could accommodate me to a T, as he had already 200 passengers engaged, well told, and on board; and in less than four hours would be under way! This was indeed short notice as we had horse and wagon to dispose of; but, howmsoever, the society of so goodly a number of passengers (some of whom were, in all probability, bound to 'Edensburgh') was a very great consideration. Old Cease was, therefore, immediately dispatched, with horse and wagon, to deposite the loading on board the boat, then lying a small distance on the canal, above Albany; and,

moreover, the black was strictly charged to make what observations time would admit of, with regard to the accommodations, appearance of passengers, &c., &c., and to make a due and correct report thereof to his master.

Ceaze went and came, and apparently in ten times more ill humor than when he went! and on being interrogated as regarded the extent and nature of his discoveries, the only answer that I received from the black saucy *salamander*, was, that 'I better go an zee for mysef, and he guess de MAJOR wish hesef on Mooseboro' farm agin!' Now this, friend, was more than the Major would have borne with impunity from the Novoscotians, much less from a lazy, thick-headed, half-witted Black! I seized the impudent scoundrel by the collar with a nervous military gripe, and demanded that he immediately and correctly inform me to the best of his ability who the passengers were, and what they looked like? Ceaze was evidently frightened, believing his master in earnest, and promised without further delay, to comply with my request, which he did, in the manner following: "You ax me massa Major, who da be, but Ceaze, upon he honor, cant telle you *zactly*, but he guess da be berry much like *oursef*, all ob one *family*, for I serb one berry ole gemman and *he* lady aboard, who Ceaze 'spec to be grandady and grandmama to all de ress."

Major: 'But, you fool, had you no tongue in your head to ask the captain who they were?

Cease: 'Yes, massa major, Ceaze got he tongue in he head, and *ax* de Cap'en who da be, and he say, da be Swisses!'

Major: 'Swisses, ha! and now Ceaze tell your master off at hand —what did they look like?'

Ceaze: 'Like de berry Debble hesef! No! not quite so *hash!* (Ceaze beg massa's pardon) look jus for all de world like a dry oak tree in a chesnee swamp, cover'd from top to bottom wid tree tousand or less noisy clacking crow blackbird!'

Major: 'And so, Ceaze, this is all, is it, that you have to tell me?'

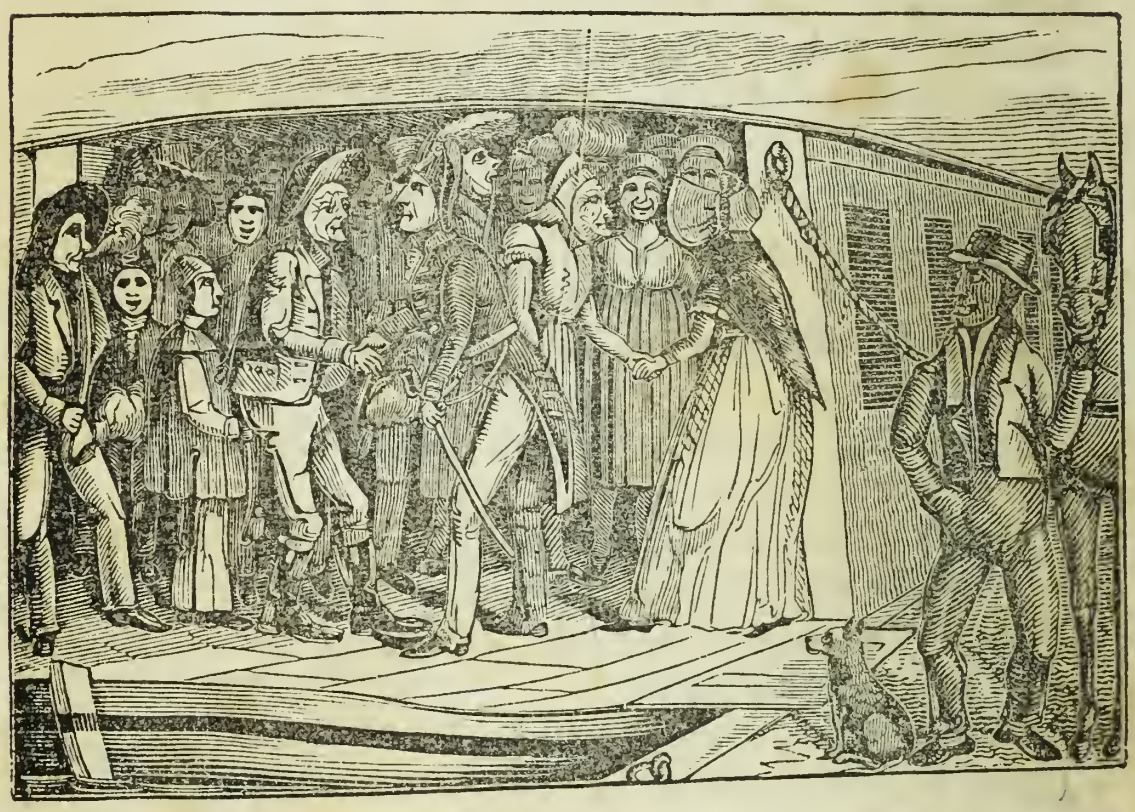
Ceaze: 'No! no! massa major: dare one ting more I got to telle you for *sartin*—Watch and Ceaze don't go dat load, you may pend on't.'

Major: 'You don't go that load, and I may 'pend on't;' and how then will you go, you stupid———'

Ceaze: 'Stop massa Major, little bit, and Ceaze tell you all bout 'um. I hab a word konversation or two long wid de Cap'in, a cleber

old gemman as eber break a biskit; he kindly offer me if I lead de horse and Watch follow me, and find ourself, he gib us our passage and charge nothing in welcome?'

As no correct information was to be obtained from the stupid blockhead, I declined having any further conversation with him, as at that moment there was something of more importance to attend to, which was to dispose of horse and wagon for the most they would bring; which having done, and by particular request of the Captain, having settled with him for our passages in advance, we were soon on our way to the boat: by Mrs. Wilkey and the boys it was concluded that if there were two such aged persons on board, as reported by Cease, it would be well to obtain an early interview with them, and thereby an introduction to the remainder of the family; and to en-



sure a degree of respect and veneration, it would be best for me on this occasion to act the Major, and to garb myself accordingly; although, in truth, they proved so numerous, and formed such a 'solid square' on board, that had there been an occasion for the Major to have drawn his sword, he would have been obliged to have stepped on shore to have done it!

Soon the sound of the horn was heard, accompanied by the captain's hoarse voice, 'hurry' 'hurry!' 'all on board!' and on board the Major with his family went, and with feelings, I assure you, apparently similar to a drove of half-frightened-to-death sheep, just entering the

slaughter-house! Very soon, however, we had the satisfaction to espy among the crowd the aged couple, whom, with somewhat of a military air, I approached, and taking the old gentleman by the hand, made my obeisance, and thus addressed him :—' Your most obedient, my aged fellow traveller; I hope for better acquaintance; pray are you, or any one of your numerous family bound to the ' City of Edensburgh?' But to this polite and friendly salutation, what do you think was his reply?—' *Ilovshephedhanzsmok'tharran!*' There's for you, a word longer than my sword, from hilt to point; and not a syllable of which could I understand! Mrs. Wilkey, fortunately, stood close by, and within fair hearing, and declared that she could make no more nor less of it, than that ' *he-loved-sheep's-head-and-smok't herren!*' I then requested that she should in like manner address the old lady, as her husband might be very deaf and not understand me, which she, with a low curtsey, accordingly did, but her reply thereto was expressly the same, ' *Ilovshephedhanzsmok'tharran!*' Unwilling thus to fail in my attempt to obtain a friendly introduction to some one of the family, I next accosted a younger member, and enquired if there were any military characters on board? as Mrs. Wilkey did at the same time, of a young woman, ' whether she was the great-great-grand daughter, or one of the *fifth* generation of the aged couple on board?' but the answers of both to these enquiries were precisely the same ' *Ilovshephedhanzsmok'tharran.* Come away, wife, said I, it is of no use if they are so extravagantly fond of their favorite dish as to be unwilling to think or talk about any thing else, leave them alone to enjoy it! the Major will go and demand a birth for himself and family in the after cabin, where I trust we shall obtain something better to eat than " sheep's-head-and-smok't-harran! But, what was my surprise, on application to the Captain for better quarters, to be told that it could not be granted!—that all penny-a-mile passengers, whoever they might be, were always considered deck passengers! and as such we had no right in the cabin! that our quarters, when below deck, were with the *Swisses!* in the hold, amidships, where we must contrive to mess and lodge together as well as we could! ' Mess and lodge with the d——, and his imps, just as soon!' exclaimed I, ' a pretty story this, to be sure, to reach the ears of my Mooseboro' friends—that Major Walter Wilkey, while late an inhabitent of Mooseboro' could have ordered half a dozen of his best ewe lambs butchered for his breakfast, in ten days after, not only cooped up to almost suffocation, with a family of two hundred Swiss

*smok't-harran-eaters*, but compelled to mess and share with them as many sheep's-heads and plucks! abominable!' exclaimed I,—'of abominables!' responded my wife. It was at that instant, I must confess, fellow traveller, that if the major ever felt a spark of military spunk burning within him, it was then enkindled to an unquenchable flame! nor did I hesitate to threaten the unmanly fresh-water captain, that if he should ever show his profile in 'Edensburgh,' I would have him indicted for 'assault and battery,' and brought before the Mayor and Aldermen! 'That's right, husband,' whispered my wife, 'for I'll wage you'll be Mayor!' But finding that threats would effect nothing, I effected to become more calm, and begged him that if he had no feeling of respect for the Major, that he would have some pity for Mrs. Wilkey, who was naturally very *narvous*, and withal *esterrica!*' and that he would be so kind and obliging as to return our passage money, and we would endeavor to obtain for ourselves a more comfortable conveyance: 'not a cent—not a cent, for love or money!' was the reply of the unfeeling brute! 'that,' he said, 'would be contrary to an old established rule of the canal boat captains, who took special good care never to return a cent passage money when once fairly in their pockets!—remember this, fellow traveller, and never pay for your passage in advance. We thus found that there was no other remedy but to bear and forbear as well as we could, with our heads more than half the time out of the port-holes, to obtain pure air and prevent suffocation, while the Swisses were almost constantly enveloped in tobacco smoke! Indeed, the boat, the whole passage, was like a floating volcano!

Of their extreme fondness for their favorite dish, their Ilovshephedhanzsmooktharren,' as they spelled it, there could be no doubt, for not a village did we pass on the canal, from Albany to Buffalo, but was thoroughly ransacked for their favorite food; and not a sheep was slain the whole route but they, I will wage, before the animal was cold, applied for and obtained the head, &c.: they appeared to care but little for the body; but give them the head and pluck and they were satisfied!—nothing else seemed to occupy their minds, asleep or awake—sick or well—when low spirited or in high glee! On the passage one of the young Swisses was accidentally crowded overboard into the canal, and was drowned. On the melancholy occasion, the natural tender feeling of Mrs. Wilkey, who had herself the year past been called to mourn the loss of a child in a similar way, led her to attempt to sympathize with and console the afflicted mother; but to

no purpose, for whatever she did or could say, the only reply made her by the bereaved parent, was—'*Ilovshephedhanzmook'tharran!*'

Indeed, fellow traveller, so unpleasant was the situation of the Major and his family while confined on board, with such a pack of tobacco smoking, swill-filching, hog-robbing, sheep's-head-and-herring-eaters, that even the situation of old Ceaze, wading through mud and mire, 'working his passage by leading-the-horse-and-finding-himself-for-nothing-*in*-welcome,' was almost enviable! It was indeed astonishing to witness with what a degree of apparent satisfaction, as well as patience, the black *sarpent* persevered in and performed the task allotted him; and all in preference, he said to spending one hour on board 'wid dem *ole* Nick's unaccountables-*de* Swisses!' It was during a very rainy and very tempestuous night, that I could not help thinking of and feeling for the two *animals*, Watch and Ceaze, exposed as they must be: often in the course of the night did I listen, while the rain poured down in torrents, to ascertain if I could hear the footsteps of the horse, and if the boat was in motion, believing it hardly possible for any human being to withstand the severity of the storm, and survive until morning. As soon as as daylight appeared, my anxiety brought me on deck to learn the fate of the poor creatures; when, the first object that greeted my eyes, was Ceaze! as wet as a thrice drowned muskrat, with the water dripping from every part of his body as if all night showered with a *water pot!* and grinning like a cheesee cat. The first salutation that I received from him, the moment he discovered my head above deck, was, 'Good mornen, massa Major, you joy yousef *clebberly* last night, I hope—Watch and I take *clear comfort!*' Indeed, there was not a boat passed us day or night on the canal, with the appearance of any Swisses on board, that was permitted to escape without 'a hail' from the impertinent black, and, in derision of me, enquiry made 'if there were any military characters on board?' and 'if any bound to Edensburgh!' and particularly, 'if they had on board a good store of '*Sheep-head-an-smoak harren!*'

After a nine days passage, and to *me* one of the most unpleasant, I assure you, fellow traveller, that was ever experienced, we had the good luck to reach Buffalo, and to bespeak a passage in less than half an hour afterward, on board of one of the Lake steamboats, taking precious good care to enquire 'if it was a-penny-a-mile boat?' and next, 'if there were any Swisses on board?'—Being answered in the negative, aboard we went, and where the

Major and family felt themselves once more at home, and after a somewhat *despet* windy passage, were conveyed speedily across Lake Erie, and safely landed at Cleveland, a pleasant little village in Ohio; but, as the Major then supposed, but a mere baby, comparatively, to 'Edensburgh!' As my family, as well as myself had become heart-sick of water-passages, we here concluded that it would be best to make a purchase of horse and waggon, and therein make an overland passage to 'Edensburgh,' the place of our destination. This we did not find much difficulty in doing, as we found that we had already arrived in a part of the country, where money was money, and old horses and waggons worth whatever they would bring; we provided ourselves with one of the second class, at a tolerable reasonable price, and, having reloaded our trumpery, in less than two hours were again under way, and travelled pretty expeditiously until we reached Detroit, the capital city of Michigan; the inhabitants we found somewhat numerous, and some few wealthy; but, as we then supposed, of very little information, as they seemed to discredit altogether the fact that there was in any part of the Western Country a city so respectable and populous as we represented 'Edensburgh' to be! In no way discouraged, however, we pushed forward with our usual speed, and soon had the satisfaction to enter upon the much boasted of '*Prairies*,' which yielded high coarse grass in abundance, and withal, *despet* wet and heavy wheeling, which Ceaze and the boys complained bitterly of, when compelled every fifteen minutes to dismount and put shoulders to the wheels! After thus travelling five days through mud and mire—a great part of the time Mrs. Wilkey on foot, we succeeded in reaching the southeast corner of the famous state of Illinois!

From thence, agreeable to the directions that I had received from Squire Soaper, we were to proceed in a northwest direction, and a nine days travel would bring us fair in view of the 'City of Edensburgh!' We had worried away eight days, and half of the time, in penetrating through a country wet and marshy, and without any marks of cultivation, or other appearance of inhabitants than here and there a miserable log hut, with 'entertainment for travellers,' chalked upon a strip of bark or shingle, and suspended to a pole—when, believing that we must be somewhere in the neighborhood of the place of our destination, by my request, the boys sought for a tree or eminence from the top of which they might be enabled to discern, at least (as Mr. Shakspeare once remarked' 'the *clouds* that

cap-towered the gaudy palaces of Edensburgh !' But they sought in vain, for nothing like either could be discerned as far as the eye-sight could extend ! We now came to a halt, and after an hour's consultation, came to the conclusion that it would be best to pursue our journey one day longer at least, and if with no better success, that one of the boys should then be dispatched with one month's provision, to Pittsburgh or Cincinnati, for one of *Dwight's Universal Gazateers*, for without the aid of which (so extremely ignorant did the inhabitants appear to be of the Geography of their own State) that it was to be feared that we should never be able to find Edensburgh. Hence, with new life, we put forward with all the speed that old Dobbin could be forced to, with the aid of cow whips and birch rods, and with old Ceaze and one of the boys occasionally with a shoulder to the wheels.

This day's travel proved to us a melancholy one, and much more so than any of the preceding ones ; as since we left Michigan, our spirits had been occasionally cheered by the appearance of a hovel ; or rather, a few unhewn logs piled one upon another, like a Dutch hog-pen, to serve for the habitation of one or more newly arrived *emigrants :* and no sooner was such a shelter erected, than the inmates, like their neighbors, hung out their shingle and commenced keeping tavern ! But on this day we had been travelling from sunrise until near sunset; and although in some instances through better wooded groves, yet without the discovery of any thing that had the appearance of inhabitants. Before dark, however, better luck attended us ; it was when about to come to the conclusion that we would proceed no further in that direction, that a small log hut (and apparently one of the cheapest and meanest construction) presented itself to view, with the usual appendage suspended from a pole erected in front, a strip of oak board three inches in width, containing the word *Hotel !* Judging from the external appearance of the wretched hovel, that if inhabited at all, it could not be by any one able to give us the sought for information, yet, as to make the usual iuquiry could do us no harm, the Major alone approached for that purpose ; and although all was still as death, and not a human being to be seen or heard therein, after one or two heavy thumps at the door with the heel of his boot, accompanied with as many ' ho, the house !' the landlady (for such she proved to be) raised and appeared at the window—between whom and myself a conversation like the following immediately thereupon ensued :—

*Landlady*—' Wha ! well traveller, and what is wanting? Entertainment, I 'spose !'

*Major*—' Can you tell us, good lady, whether you ever heard of such a place in these parts, or any other part of the world, as Edensburgh ? And if so, where and in what part of the world it may be found ?'

*Landlady*—' Wha ! why, luck stranger ! why, yes, you ! and you may depend on't as s-a-r-t-i-n-l-y as-you-live, that aunt *Kasiah* tells the *truth*, that you are now no where else upon earth but in Edensburgh City ! You are from the east, man, I guess, and may I be so bold as to ax your name ?'

*Major*—' Well, aged mother, when I left home, my name was Major Walter Wilkey, of Mooseboro', but there is I think but precious little of the Major left now ! (Ceaze, aside. ' I take my oaf ob dat !) and have come with my family a great way from down east, as purchasers in and actual settlers of the populous and thriving City of Edensburgh ! And now, madam, joking aside, will you, in pity to us, inform us whether you ever heard of such a city in these parts or no ?'

*Landlady*—' Wha ! unbelieving man, you, as sure as parsnips are parsnips, this here city is Edensburgh—so named but a-three months ago by Squire Soaper, the lucky good man who bought the land !'

*Major*—(Provoked, dismayed and disheartened)—' Soaper, indeed, and a *soft* one, no doubt ! Edensburgh ! yes, as sure as parsnips are parsnips, I am now in Edensburgh !—yes, the thriving and populous city of Edensburgh. Hem ! well, may be ! But where in the name of *gosh*, woman, are its public and private edifices, its increased population, its Park, College, State House, and other squares, its Broadway, Pearl, Washington, Wall, Grand and other streets ?'

Ceazer (in a low voice)—' Massa Major, wont you juss plese ax missa, where about *Commershall treet !*'

The old lady here hastily withdrew from the window, and for my better information, and in confirmation of what she had declared to me, soon returned with the " Platt" that the Squire had left with her. ' Here, said she, it is, in plain black and white, just as it was *staked* down by Squire Soaper, (placing her fore finger of the right hand upon the sheet, and drawing it moderately across from right to left, occasionally looking to *me* and then to the Platt) you now stand Major, (observed she) with one foot in Washington street, and the other in Grand street ; your good woman between Pearl and Broad-

way, your horse in State street, the fore-wheels of your waggon in Wall street, and the hind in Market street; and your black man stands in Commercial street; (Ceaze—'Gosh, I taught so! and one feet I spec, at low water mark!') and your dog in College Square!'

*Major*—'My dog in College Square! and there let him remain until he becomes more wise than his master has proved himself!—Hem! this beats the Pine Swamp Speculation all hollow!—and for the first time the Major perceives and believes, that he has been thoroughly soaped by that arch Yankee, Squire Simon Soaper! And pray tell me, good woman, how long was the Squire himself an inhabitant of Edensburgh, as you call it?

*Landlady*—'Just three half days; half a day in making the purchase and staking out the City—half a day in drawing and fixing this here Platt, and another half day, with the assistance of my old man, in logging the house we live in.'

*Major*—'Squire Soaper was a Speculator, I suspect, and came into this country with plenty of gold and silver to buy up Government lands?'

*Landlady*—'O, no indeed, that he didn't! He came into this country a poor man, as a body may say—just as one half the yankee emigrants come here—not worth more than five dollars in the

world, and that in a few yankee notions, wooden bowls, and pewter spoons, and the like, which he swoped for this township, and which he says as good opportunities offer, he intends to swop away for good cultivated farms down east !"

Major.—"And Landlady, will you now inform me what is the population, or to be better understood, what number of inhabitants "Edensburgh" now contains ?"

Landlady.—Well, lets me see, (counting her fingers) there is myself and my old man, are *two*, and there is Bridget Bilkey is *three*, Ebednigo Bilkey is *four*, Epaphrosticus Bilkey is *five*, Askwell Bilkey is *six*, Birchee Bilkey is *seven* and Ruthful Bilkey is *eight*, of these myself and husband are *living* inhabitants, but the Bilkeys (poor souls) are all *dead*, and died with the *Fever* and *Ague* within one week of each other ! and lie buried in 'Market Square !' "

Mrs. Wilkey.—"Pray husband, for the *lives* of us, don't stop here ; lets us go back again !"

Major.—That won't do now wife, it is a pity that some of us could not have *dreamed* of this before—the Mooseboro' farm is gone, and we have now nothing to go back to but poverty and want !"

Ceazer.—"Yes, Massa Major, I did sartinly dream of um, and I tellee you now, we better be off in a twink ob an eye, fore dat *Feber-an-ach* gets hole on us, and make jus such havoc wid our family, and den sus-I, de ole lady be count her finger agin, dus : (Ceaze counting his own) dare Major Wilkey, he is one, and Molly Wilkey his wife, she two, and Ceazer Wilkey, (gau blessee him, good ole soul) he be three, and Jonathan Wilkey, he is four, Jerry Wilkey, he five, and Josey Wilkey, he make six—six *Bilkeys* and six *Wilkeys* all berred out dare, in Markum Square !—qui !"

Here we were, in a peck of trouble, sure enough ! my Mooseboro, Farm gone—irrecoverably gone !—more than eleven hundred miles from a single acquaintance (with the exception of my family) and with but one week's provision on hand, or the most distant prospect of obtaining any—and with but just thirteen shillings and sixpence half-penny in my pocket !—my wife sick, dejected and discouraged ! the boys disappointed and mortified !—my horse lame and wind-broken !—old Ceaze fretful and saucy !—and Watch (the dog with a leg broken by the wolves) half starved and snapping at swarms of blood thirsty musquetoes !—nor was this all, my "Farm of 300 acres, producing 400 bushels to an acre !" had been either swallowed up by an earthquake, or in some other way had unacountably disappeared, and could no where be found !—in such a predicament

did the Major and family find themseves on the first day of their arrival at "Edensburgh!" and as night approached, and no other shelter but that afforded by the log-house Inn, it was beneath its humble roof that we were compelled to seek lodgings and therein to abide so long as we remained in the country! which the landlady informed us was erected "expresly for the accommodation of travellers!"—that the price of board was *one dollar* each, per day!" and on enquiry what kind of living we might expect, her reply was "*a variety*," and refered us to the "Bill of Fare!" a board suspended from a log in the corner of the room, on which was chalked —"for Breakfast—*Pork* and *Potatoes!*" "Dinner—*Potatoes* and *Pork!*"—Supper—*Indian ash Cakes* without *Potatoes!*" and a "tea-cup of *whiskey*, night and morning, as a substitute for tea and coffee"—"this (she said) was allowed to be a charming living in Illinois, where as there was not one of a million of acres under cultivation (and probably would not be for fifty years hence) beef, grain, and evey other eatable was despet scarce and high!"—"But why (said I) good woman, where land is represented so exceeding fertile, does not the 'squire devote a part of his purchase to cultivation!" "not he indeed, (she replied) he knows (as every other yankee speculator does,) his interest better than that, that it is of ten times more value to *stake* it out into *City* house lots, which brings a fine price in the market at the east! and it is raley true, Mr. Major, that so much is now-a-days done in this here quarter by your eastern land-speculators, in buying and selling, instead of planting and tilling, that at a mile distance one little patch of corn of half an acre, became the property of seven different owners before it was fit to harvest, and then for the want of fencing, the pesket wolves reaped and ran off with the crop!—and it is a sartin fact, that so little is done to improve and cultivate the soil, that we have mostly to depend on your eastern markets for our Beef and other eatables, which I think must make it very scarce and high! with you down easters!" (Ceaze) "Scarce and high! O no Missa, berry plenty and resonble I sure you at de pressen time, in New-York an Bosson Markets, and so-fort, where you get a pound ob de berry bess shank-bone-stake for two-an-elben pence, and make you present ob de suet into de bargin!"

It was (as I observed) in this wretched hovel (the produce of one half days labour) and with no better food than that mentioned, that the Major and his family were obliged to put up with for the space of one year! going only a little way abroad in the day time, as we

had been at night too much serenaded by the wolves to venture out after dark !—the Major ought not however to omit to mention one convenience of which this famous log-house Inn could boast—one candle (at night) was sufficient to illuminate every room therein—the bar-room, parlour,, dining hall, sleeping chambers, &c. &c. had been either all knocked into one, or the careless carpenters, (Squire Soaper and the landlady's "old man") had forgotten to put up the partition logs—this evil howevr, was remedied (as regarded the sleeping rooms) by suspending blankets between males and females of different families—and hence the accommodating old lady said the custom was on the arrival of many strangers, to enquire how many different families there were ? and to furnish blankets accordingly !—on Mrs. Wilkey's calling for a broom at night that she might sweep the mud from a space sufficient to lie down and attempt to seek repose, the landlady declared that "she did'nt bleve there was such an article in all Illinois !—that the prairie mud in their houses was too thick and heavy for corn and birch brooms," but as a substitute which they used brought her a scrub hoe! My only object in remaining more than one week in the country, was, the hope that some tom-fool (like myself) might possibly happen along and be found willing to give me a sum sufficient for my 'Edensburgh lots' as would defray our expences back to Main !—but we had passed nearly six months in the country without beholding the faces of more than two or three strangers, and they on their return to New-England—when early one morning Ceaze rushed into the house, (apparently in great fright and nearly out of breath) and begged that I would get my sword in an instant and Watch and the boys and follow him ! I hastened to the door, and to my great astonishment, found out the cause of Ceaze's affright and alarm ! the whole of "Park" place and a part of "Wall-street," was occupied by one hundred or more, of those detestable Sheeps-head-and-pluck-gormandizers, the Swisses ! squatting very composedly on their hams, in a circle around a blazing fire, over which were suspended half a dozen iron pots, filled to their brims with their favorite food ! and whom, as soon as our landlady saw, she pronounced "*Squatters !*" and begged that if we valued our "building lots," as worth any thing that the intruders might be driven off, and without a moments delay, as two hours peaceable possesion, would entitle them to an indisputable right to the land !

It was at this important crisis that I the second time discovered since leaving Moosboro,' that I had one spark, at least, of *military*

spunk remaining !—I seized my old faithful keen-edged *terrifier*, and mustering my forces, the three boys, Watch and Ceaze) made a dash upon them by surprize !

It was the work of a minute--as in less than that time we got them on a retreat, and we in a close and hot pursuit following them down "Wall-street," through " Broadway," up "Pearl-street," into " Commercial-street," up to their knees in mud ! where, while some were (by their gesticulations) begging for quarters, others were exclaiming, " Ilovshephedhanzsmook'therren !"—" go, and be hang'd to you (said I) and cook and eat your fill of your " sheeps-head-and-smook't-herren !" but blame me if you shall do it on my territories ! " nor on mine in Commarshall-treet !" added Ceaze, shaking his club—in a very short time thereafter, however, we had the satisfaction to see them extricate themselves from their miry condition, and depart with bag and baggage, pots, pot-hooks and trammels, and leave us once more in quiet possesion of " Edensburgh !" and where we were permitted to remain in peace and quietness (with the exception of the dismal nocturnal howlings of wolves) for the space of three months longer, when we were visited by another and still heavier judgment !—my boys, (in company with Mr. Van Swinglecome or Stringlecone, our landlord) having gone in search of prairie hens eggs and ground nuts, as a substitute for potatoes, (of which, as of every other provision, we had become very short,)

they were overtaken nine miles from home, or any other human haitation' by a heavy fall of rain, by which they all took shocking colds and which produced in a few days after, that dreadful scourge of the West—the Fever and Ague!—if there was any thing wanting to complete our misery, it was this! the poor boys one hour alternately shaking and shivering as if freezing to death, and crying out for woollen blankets and warming pans!—and the next burning and blistering with fever heat like a roasting goose or turkey on a spit-jack! and their mother (poor woman) being threatened with an attack of the same complaint, the only nurse that could be depended on was Mrs. Van Swinglecome, who acted in the double capacity of nurse and landlady—and the only medicine that she could prescribe, was powerful doses (five times a day) of *pumpkin whiskey* sweetened with *maple molasses*, which when their chills came on, had a powerful effect to warm and quiet them!—a Physician could indeed have been obtained from the distance of twenty-three miles, but as the landlady observed that she understood that he had obtained a knowledge of his skill from the swisses, there could be but little doubt that "Ilovshephedhauzsmoktharran" would be the principle ingredient of the medicine that he would administer, and be more likely to kill than cure his patients!

In this dreadful condition, fellow traveller, we worried out two months longer, completing just one year from the day we entered "Edensburgh!" when we having all become either by sickness or starvation reduced to mere shadows of "living skeletons!" we concluded that before death should in some form or other, unite the *Wilkey's* with the *Bilkey's* it would be best, to satisfy demands, to give our landlord a quit-claim deed of our "Edensburgh building lots" and set out on our return back to Maine—and as you perceive, we are thus far on our journey; determined if kind providence permits us to reach the place of our destination, to say to our old friends as well as to every other son of New England

"Who have a *good home* and don't *realize* it,
A trip to the *West* will teach them to *prize* it!"

FEB 27 1930